

CREATION SCIENCE MINISTRIES: WHY THE NEW EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLE IS DANGEROUS

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Some of the New Evangelical ministries do a lot of good, and for this reason fundamentalists are enticed to associate with them. For example, Answers in Genesis and the Institute for Creation Research do a fantastic job of defending the literal Genesis account of creation against Darwinian evolution. Ken Ham's Creation Museum is a masterpiece of biblical apologetics. Ray Comfort does a tremendous job in apologetics and personal evangelism. I have used some of their material and I truly and fervently thank the Lord for what these men are doing for the cause of Christ as far as it goes. The problem is that it doesn't go far enough, and the part that is lacking is serious.

What is the problem? Why don't we jump on their bandwagon, join hands, and do these wonderful works together? (Again, I am not talking about using some of their materials; I am talking about joining hands together for ministry.)

The difference comes back to the issue of separation. They don't believe in it, and we do.

The rejection of separatism has been the heart of New Evangelicalism for more than half a century. Harold Ockenga, one of the fathers of the movement, said, "We repudiate separatism." (For documentation see my free eBook "New Evangelicalism: Its History, Characteristics, and Fruit.") Billy Graham epitomized and popularized this philosophy.

If they believe in separation at all, they believe that it only has to do with the "cardinal doctrines." When I visited the Creation Museum, I was treated well and thoroughly enjoyed my visit and recommend it to anyone. But Ken Ham told me personally that since Answers in Genesis is "not a church," they don't have to concern themselves with issues other than creationism.

This is why such organizations typically do not take a clear stand against unscriptural modes of baptism (e.g., infant baptism, pouring, sprinkling), women pastors, allegorical interpretation of prophecy (AiG says their staff "represent a wide range of eschatological frameworks), the heresy that a born-again believer can lose his salvation, errors pertaining to Holy Spirit baptism and Spirit filling, Graham-style ecumenical evangelism, the errors of the church growth movement (e.g., Rick Warren, Robert Schuller, and Bill Hybels), the error of Christian psychology, and the heresy of modern textual criticism.

Henry Morris, founder of the Creation Research Institute, was a wonderful Christian man who did a lot of good for the cause of Christ, but he was a convinced ecumenist. He believed that the defense of creation was more important than maintaining doctrinal purity. In the *History of Modern Creationism*, he described the role that Seventh-day Adventists have played in the field of creation science and he reproved evangelicals for not working more closely with Adventists. Dr. Morris joined the Creation-Deluge Society which was founded in 1938 by Adventists. He said the fact that the organization did not draw more non-Adventists is “a rebuke to the conservatives and fundamentalists in the other denominations, who were either so unconcerned with these basic scientific issues or so enamored with their schemes of evolutionary compromise that they had nothing significant to contribute” (p. 135).

Dr. Morris apparently did not consider the possibility of a third option, which was that evangelicals and fundamentalists of that day wanted to obey God’s Word by not yoking together in joint ministry and close association with heretics who followed a deceived female prophet (Ellen G. White).

Dr. Morris’ philosophy was that only a few “fundamentals” are essential for fellowship. His rejection of the Biblical doctrine of separation is evident in the fact that he remained a member of the liberal American Scientific Affiliation for 32 years.

The representatives of CRI, Answers in Genesis, and similar ministries speak in churches that represent a wide variety of doctrine. They will be in a Methodist church one Sunday and Calvinist church the next Sunday and a Pentecostal church the next. The reason they can be invited to such a wide variety of forums and even be invited back is that they narrow down their message and focus only on creation science or basic apologetics or evangelism or the family or some other single-issue orientation.

Actually they might have more than one issue. They might have ten or twenty. The problem is that they refuse to make an issue of the WHOLE counsel of God. In contrast, Paul exemplified exactly what they neglect to do.

“For I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

And in this, Paul was merely following in His Master’s footsteps. Jesus commanded His disciples to teach converts “to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Mat. 28:20).

Paul instructed Timothy to keep the truth “without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:14). A spot is a small, seemingly insignificant thing.

Jude instructed every believer to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). As Jude didn’t delineate what part of the faith is to be defended, the obvious

meaning is that whatever aspect of the faith is under attack at any given time, God's people should rally to its defense rather than pretending that it is a "non-essential."

I challenge anyone to show me where the Scripture encourages the believer to "stand for the cardinal truths and downplay the peripherals."

IN ESSENTIALS UNITY

The New Evangelical philosophy is often stated by the dictum, "In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity," (commonly attributed to Augustine, but apparently first spoken by a 17th-century Lutheran named Rupertus Meldenius). This became the rallying cry of the Moravians, who did many good things but refused to reject the serious heresy of infant baptism, among other things, and promoted unity above the absolute truth of God's Word.

The same dictum has been heartily adopted by modern New Evangelicals and most "fundamentalists."

The rejection of biblical separation by these New Evangelical ministries is also evident in their refusal to take a stand against the worldliness and compromise that characterizes the contemporary church growth philosophy, with its love for rock music, sensual fashions, Hollywood entertainment, and pretty much everything the pop culture produces. Some of them might say privately they are opposed to the increasing worldliness in the churches, but they do not preach plainly against it. Rather, they accept invitations from contemporary churches and are willing to teach on creationism in such churches while avoiding "controversial side" issues.

I call ministries like Answers In Genesis "one string" ministries. Instead of playing all of the strings of the New Testament faith, they play one. In the case of Ken Ham and Answers In Genesis, they play that string vigorously and most expertly, but at the end of the day it is only one string, and that isn't enough.

They also need to take a stand for the New Testament church, for the preservation of Scripture as opposed to the heresy of modern textual criticism, for biblical baptism, for the cessation of apostolic gifts, for eternal security, for the purity of churches in the midst of end-times apostasy, for sacred music, for modest dress, for distinct separation from the filthy pop culture, and many other things.

The failure to preach and practice separation has very real consequences. For example, Ken Ham admits that the churches he is associated with lose most of their young people. There is a reason for that, and the reason is not just because they are weak on defending literal creation. The problem is far deeper and broader. It has to do with an overall weak approach to the Word of God and Christian living and discipleship. Typically, preachers in these churches don't boldly proclaim the WHOLE counsel of God and reprove the pop culture and other forms of worldliness

in a plain manner and preach sold-out discipleship, and as a consequence the people tend to live much like the world. This is a foundational error that is not addressed clearly in any of the books I have read by Ken Ham, because he has determined just to focus on creation-science and basic apologetics.

Mr. Ham doesn't even deal clearly with the salvation issue. His book "Already Gone," which describes the departure of youth from evangelical churches, though excellent in some ways, doesn't deal sufficiently with a most important and foundational issue, which is the fact that a vast number of the young people in these churches aren't born again. That is an issue that is truly "essential."

If someone argues that these ministries (e.g., Answers in Genesis, Creation Research Institute) aren't New Evangelical and that they do not actually reject separatism, I would like for them to send me the documented answers to the following questions:

First, when has that ministry issued a statement delineating and supporting the doctrine of biblical separation as it applies both to ecclesiology and to the world?

Second, when has that ministry renounced the popular but unscriptural philosophy "In essential unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity"?

Third, when has that ministry supported and promoted a fundamentalist, separatist ministry?

Fourth, when has that ministry taken a stand against Billy Graham and all of the evil he has done through his New Evangelical philosophy?

Please send me the published statements or the sermons and lectures in which they have taken such stands, and I will be glad to say that I have been wrong about them.

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